



TOXIC



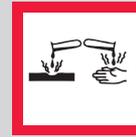
ENVIRONMENTAL
HAZARD



POISONOUS



HARMFUL



CORROSIVE

HEALTHCARE RISK WASTE



Healthcare risk waste (HCRW) can include medical, pharmaceutical and veterinary waste that is contaminated with blood, body fluids and/or faeces.

HOUSEHOLD HCRW



Household HCRW forms a very small percentage of the general domestic waste. Due to the small quantities of household HCRW that is generated, the City accepts such waste as part of the residential domestic waste that is removed by the City as general waste.



Every household generates a small amount of blood-stained bandages and plasters, for example when children graze their knees. Similarly, expired pharmaceuticals and sanitary waste are generated by households. The soiled disposable diapers and adult nappies of households become general waste. However, bulk soiled nappies with infectious diseases from hospitals and care units are problematic and are classified as HCRW.



People who suffer from type 1 diabetes need daily injections and these needles must be disposed of in a safe manner. Expired or unused pharmaceuticals and medicines accumulate quickly and cause a huge problem when households need to dispose of them. On a landfill unauthorised scavengers or children regard medicines as sweets. The consumption of discarded pharmaceuticals and medicines can cause major trauma and even death.



TB and HIV patients who receive home care should be careful to dispose of products contaminated by body fluids in a tied plastic bag at their local clinic.

The responsible disposal of HCRW generated at home is of great importance.

INSTITUTIONAL HCRW



Bulk soiled nappies from hospitals, old age homes and frail care units possibly contaminated by infectious diseases are problematic and are classified as HCRW.



Hospitals, clinics, general practitioners, dentists and veterinary institutions generate different types of HCRW, for example sharps (such as needles and blades), body parts, blood-soaked materials, infected nappies, PVC pipes connected to ICU equipment, genotoxic and radio-active HCRW, pharmaceuticals and even corpses and dead animals.



The City does not handle the HCRW from for example any hospitals and clinics; medical, pseudo-medical, veterinary and dental practices; mortuaries; medical research and forensic laboratories; tattoo parlours and traditional healers. All the HCRW generated at the institutions above are removed, transported and disposed of by accredited HCRW-treatment companies where incineration, sterilisation and various other approved methods are applied.



APPLICABLE LEGISLATION



- National Environmental Management Waste Act, Act 59 of 2008.
- Draft Health Care Risk Waste Management Regulations. General notice 452 of 2012, Government Gazette no. 35405, June 2012.
- Department of Environmental Affairs
- Western Cape Health Care Waste Management Amendment Act, Act 6 of 2010.
- Western Cape Government Policy on nappy waste. (With regard to nappies: if the nappy contains just urine, in other words the person who used the nappy did not have an infectious disease and the nappy is non-hazardous, it must be bagged and sealed appropriately. It is acceptable for this waste to be disposed of with household waste. If this waste comes from a healthy person, it is not considered to be hazardous waste. However, if the nappy was used by someone who has an infectious disease or where a particular risk has been identified (based for example on a medical diagnosis by a doctor), the nappy is considered hazardous and must be contained in the appropriate containers and disposed of as 'hazardous waste'.)
- City of Cape Town: Integrated Waste Management By-Law, 2009, and the City of Cape Town: Integrated Waste Management Amendment By-Law, 2010. (The disposal of HCRW: The disposal of HCRW is prohibited in terms of section 17. The City may impose an immediate fine if excessive HCRW is placed in residential domestic waste to be disposed of as general domestic waste (18.6).)

TIPS FOR THE HANDLING OF HCRW



- Tie bandages or nappies containing body fluids in a plastic bag and dispose of the waste with domestic waste that is removed by the City as general waste.
- Liaise with the clinic, pharmacy or general practitioner to accept used sharps. Place all sharps used at home for injections and as diabetic needles in an empty, thick PVC container (such as an empty milk bottle), seal the container and place it in the domestic waste that is removed by the City as general waste.
- Old medicines, medicinal chemicals and homeopathic medicines must be returned to the pharmacy, or even the supplier, for responsible destruction and/or disposal.
- Dead animals should not be thrown into residential domestic waste. Make contact with the closest veterinary service for private disposal or contact the City for a pre-arranged disposal of the carcass at the Vissershok landfill site. The diseased carcasses of horses and cows during epidemics are arranged to be disposed of at the Vissershok landfill site through the State Veterinary Services.
- When in doubt about the disposal of any HCRW, whether it is about the quantity or the type of waste product, contact your local City of Cape Town Environmental Health Practitioner.



For more information contact: 0860 103 089 or go to www.capetown.gov.za/solidwaste

PLEASE NOTE: This leaflet is also available in Afrikaans and Xhosa on request.
Hierdie pamflet is ook op versoek in Afrikaans en Xhosa beskikbaar.
Esi sibhengezo siyafumaneka nangesiBhulu nesiXhosa xa siceliwe.